UNIVERSITY COUNCIL

American Federation of Teachers

University of California, Santa Barbara Chapter, Local 2141

Executive Board

P. O. Box 15030 UCSB
Santa Barbara, CA 93107

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ANNUAL REPORT TO THE MEMBERSHIP
UC-AFT Santa Barbara Chapter, Local 2141

As the end of this academic year approaches, there is new evidence that the UC faculty needs (and to an increasing degree understands that it needs) better representation of its interests.

*Meeting with Gary Hart: In a May 10 meeting with UCSB Academic Senate and faculty organization leaders (attended by Bernie Kirtman, representing UC-AFT) Assemblyman Gary Hart expressed the view that UC's presentations before the legislature had been particularly weak this year. He pointed out the relative ineffectiveness and invisibility of the UC Academic Senate on legislative matters, in contrast with faculty representatives of the State Colleges and Universities and the Community Colleges.

Various explanations for this state of affairs were put forward by the faculty members present, notably the tendency of Senate officials to defer to and echo the comments of UC administrators, in a misguided interpretation of the spirit of "shared governance". The serious implications of this situation for UC faculty provide yet another compelling argument for strong and independent representation -- and the sooner, the better. We are fortunate to have enlightened legislators such as Gary Hart in Sacramento, but not even our best legislative friends can save the UC faculty from counterproductive misrepresentation.

*Collective Bargaining Election Returns: In three faculty elections held this year on the Berkeley, Santa Cruz and UCLA campuses, 49% of those voting finally favored collective bargaining representation, despite vocal administration opposition. This suggests a strong swing toward collective bargaining, even though only one campus (Santa Cruz) actually selected a representative organization.

We now expect that an election will take place next year on the Santa Barbara campus, and we believe that the trends noted above, coupled with the chill of the national political and economic climate, will produce a clear-cut victory for collective bargaining. We intend to run on the AFT's lengthy record of strong advocacy of faculty

interests, from academic freedom to better salaries and fringe benefits (e.g., a comprehensive dental plan), and on our affiliation with the power and expertise of the American labor movement. In this regard, we welcome the increasing support which the California Federation of Teachers, and its excellent President Raoul Teilhet, have given to UC-AFT this year, in the form of office space, secretarial assistance, and organizational support.

*Common Efforts with Faculty Association and AAUP: Common concerns over arbitrary administrative actions this year have brought UC-AFT into coalition with two other faculty organizations - the UCSB Faculty Association and the local chapter of the American Association of University Professors. Following the abrupt dismissal of the Chairman of the English Department, the executive boards of these three groups met jointly and proposed new safeguards governing appointment and dismissal of departmental chairpersons. Following action by the Faculty Legislature, confirmed by an overwhelming mail ballot of the faculty, and extended negotiations, the UCSB administration agreed this month to issue new guidelines. These provisions will sanction departmental elections as a regular part of the consulting procedure in the selection of department chairpersons in the future and require "wide and timely" consultation before chairpersons may be removed from office.

More important than these actions, perhaps, is the perception of a greatly improved sensitivity on the part of the UCSB administration to the need for careful consultation with faculty -- a further demonstration of the practical benefits of strong representation. The UC-AFT executive board has followed up on these initiatives and met jointly with the Faculty Association's board to assess areas of agreement, and to define our differences. Though many of its members share our basic concerns, the Faculty Association's real attitudes toward collective bargaining have yet to be tested. The present indications are that it has a few lessons to learn (The President of the victorious Faculty Association at Santa Cruz promptly admitted that he couldn't think of anything that needed to be negotiated). We plan to continue the dialogue and, where possible, chart parallel courses of action.

On the national level, a cooperative agreement between AFT and AAUP units in the State University of New York system seems to indicate that a unified faculty organization is beginning to evolve. We believe that cooperative efforts will increasingly prove more productive than internecine conflicts, and that a strategy of faculty unity is the wave of the future -- for further particulars, see Bob Potter's guest editorial in the April UCSB Faculty Association Newsletter, reprinted in the May issue of the University Guardian.

*Librarians Coming Back On Board? The language of the Berman Higher Education Employee Relations Act placed Academic Senate members in a predetermined bargaining unit and left uncertain the place of Librarians, Lecturers and other non-Senate academic employees. One immediate consequence was the transfer of affiliation of many Librarians from UC-AFT to the California State Employees Association, which had promised to bargain aggressively on their behalf. It now appears that a majority of these former AFT members feel disillusioned with CSEA, and they are showing their displeasure by rejoining AFT. We now believe that we will be successful, during the next year, in winning a representation election for UC Librarians. We are the only organization which seeks to represent all UC academic employees, and we have been active in hearings before the Public Employees Relations Board in arguing for the best possible bargaining units for Librarians and non-Senate academics.

In closing, we submit a list of nominees for next year's executive board, thanking the membership for its support of our activities and promising that we will continue these efforts. Your advice on specific problems and issues, and your suggestions for areas of further action will be appreciated, and to this end we hope you will be able to attend the Fall general membership meeting to plan next year's activities. In the meantime, have a good summer!

Respectfully Submitted,

Executive Board
UC-AFT Local 2141